THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Only MARR telephones (Multi Access Rural Radio) and WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) fixed telephones in rural areas are electricity operated.

(a) No, Sir. MARR and WLL-fixed telephones are provided with battery backups to make them functional during prolonged power failure.

(b) Does no arise.

Rebate in rental for rural telephones

†2959. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rural telephone subscribers have to pay rental etc. at par with urban subscribers on enhancement of capacity of exchanges;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps Government are taking to continue with the rebate extended to rural subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) Rebate extended to rural subscribers is still valid.

† Originai notice of the question was received in Hindi.